

National Service Impact in South Carolina

AmeriCorps

The Trident United Way Financial Stability Project (FSP) uses a series of interventions that create sustainable change. The framework begins with addressing basic needs, then increasing basic skills, followed by increasing income and savings, and finally gaining and sustaining assets. AmeriCorps members serve as FSP Navigators and are placed in partner agencies and help individuals and families gain access to resources that support stability. The program's baseline data from year one to year two showed an increase in GED enrollment of 169 percent, and a 120 percent increase of participants who attained a GED. Work Keys also showed an increase of 850 percent. From year two to year three there was a 14 percent increase of GED participants enrolled and a 25 percent increase of participants who attained a GED. Individuals who received a Work Keys certificate increased by 68 percent.

AmeriCorps NCCC

AmeriCorps NCCC team Delta 7 worked for the Greenville County Recreation District at Camp Spearhead. Projects included clearing a forest corridor, building an observation deck, and repairing a storage shed. The team also supervised 143 local volunteers. The work accomplished by the team at Camp Spearhead will allow campers to access parts of nature that were not available to them previously. The team learned new skills and witnessed campers using the finished products of their hard work.

AmeriCorps VISTA

The South Carolina National Guard AmeriCorps VISTA project engages four members in Columbia to develop resources for the Service Member & Family Support Programs, J1.1. VISTA developed content for the J1.1 website, providing access to resources for service members. Now more than 100 employers committed to hiring service members are listed on the site. Unemployment among service members dropped from 16 percent to 3.35 percent in one year, thanks to the J1.1. VISTA built a partnership with H&R Block, making financial education available to service members, and established a partnership with a local nonprofit for free tax preparation. VISTA also created communication pieces including the website, newsletters, and social media tools. A Teen Panel set up by VISTA in the Midlands allows military children to share concerns and challenges they face when parents are deployed. Plans are underway to create teen groups across the state.

Senior Corps

Foster Grandparents in Williamsburg County are helping schoolchildren overcome difficult odds to achieve success in the classroom. One-third of the county's population lives below the poverty line and more than 40 percent of the children are growing up in single-parent families. Last year, 34 Foster Grandparents with Vital Aging tutored 175 elementary school students at risk of academic failure. More than 80 percent of the students in the program increased their reading skills by at least one grade level and showed a reduction in negative behavior. These students also showed higher promotion rates to the next grade level. As Foster Grandparents continue to support these students, the program expects to see ongoing academic improvement and increasing levels of promotion.

Social Innovation Fund

The Greenville Regional Funder Collaborative (GRFC) has been awarded \$300,000 over two years by Social Innovation Fund intermediary Jobs for the Future, which they will match dollar-for-dollar. This collaborative will support foundational skills training for job seekers as they relate to manufacturing careers, and will include career pathway guidance, coaching, and support services. The strength on the GRFC approach is tapping local manufacturing employers to provide the insight regarding the skills gaps that foundational skills training will address. Alignment and adjustment of existing programs by diverse entities will help create an identifiable pipeline of qualified workers. Through employer input and program alignment, partners will assist job seekers in attaining the required knowledge and assist employers in hiring qualified workers. GRFC expects to serve 200 job seekers in year one and 300 job seekers in year two through their participation in foundational skills training. They expect an 85 percent training completion rate, an 80 percent employment rate of those completing training, and a 90 percent employment retention rate.

Volunteer Generation Fund

Through the Volunteer Generation Fund, Volunteer SC (VSC) has provided consultations to strengthen affiliate groups of the statewide professional volunteer management organization; helped grow membership at its annual conference; and led the formation of a new South Carolina Association for Volunteer Administration affiliate in Georgetown. Additionally, VSC established a forum where Volunteer Center managers from across the state can meet quarterly for resource-sharing and professional training. VSC was also instrumental in the expansion of the Get Connected volunteer management software system that matches individuals with volunteer opportunities to include a new Disaster Response Module, so spontaneous volunteers can be matched and trained with disaster response agencies. VSC also provided training to more than 200 agencies.